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# The University of Dayton

## News Release

March 8, 1993

Contact: Ellen Campfield or Pam Huber

### **HARVARD ECONOMIST TO SPEAK AT UD ABOUT OVERWORKED AMERICANS**

DAYTON, Ohio — Ask your friends how they spend their free time and you might get a sarcastic "What free time?" in reply.

Most Americans feel that way, according to Juliet Schor, Harvard economist and author of *The Overworked American*.

Schor will speak at the University of Dayton at 8 p.m. Monday, March 22, in the Kennedy Union Ballroom on campus. Admission to her lecture, sponsored by UD's Distinguished Speakers Series and University Honors and Scholars program, is free and open to the public.

Schor says that since the 1940s American workers have put in longer hours and increased their productivity at the cost of leisure time. Schor says that lack of free time probably hurts Americans' well-being and could be harming the economy.

"Shorter hours would be more profitable," Schor says. "All research shows that shortening the day would bring higher productivity because people are willing and able to work more efficiently and more intensively."

In her book Schor asserts that, in addition to increasing productivity, giving workers more leisure time could lower unemployment. "Ironically, the tendency of capitalism to expand work is often associated with a growth in joblessness. ... While many employees are subjected to mandatory overtime and are suffering from overwork, their co-workers are put on involuntary part-time."

There are a number of ways that employers could provide workers with more free time, Schor says. "Employers could just reduce hours without reducing pay and people would

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respond by doing more. There's also the option to trade off income for more time off, thereby allowing workers to make their own choices about hours. Workers would essentially be buying vacation time."

Schor, who is also the director of women's studies at Harvard, says that working women have been especially hard-hit by decreasing leisure time.

"I think women are feeling themselves to be the most overworked Americans. They still have household responsibilities and they have moved into the work place. They have felt this stress of decreased leisure time particularly."

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**NOTE TO EDITORS:** For interviews, call Juliet Schor at Harvard at (617) 495-9022.